

STEVENS DENIES HE'S PISTOL SHOT

Familiar Only With Big Arms, Brother Asserts

(Continued from Page 3)

that she saw Henry Stevens one or two years later nearly collapse at the scene of the crime.

"Henry Dickman, who deserted from the army, navy and marine corps of the United States, as well as New Jersey State Troopers.

"Garvin, a discharged employee of the Burns Detective Agency, who



Mrs. Frances Hall A. Simpson

reported an alleged story by Mr. Gorsline.

"Ira Nixon, who repeated a story said to have been told by Soper, who already had denied it;

"Jane Gibson, who, in order to support the case, against the present defendants, changed her story told at the preliminary hearing, and now says Henry Stevens was at the scene of the crime."

Stevens on Stand

Simpson's tardiness delayed things a few minutes. Case began, unaware the prosecutor was absent.

John Bunn pinned up the map of De Russeys Lane.

"Mr. Henry Stevens!"

Stevens arose from his seat next to his sister, threw back his head and walked to the witness stand. He stood with shoulders back when the court crier held the Bible as the oath was administered.

It was his birthday, he said, with a likable grin, and for the first time since the trial began, persons in the courtroom felt there was something human in the man who for three weeks had set so dour and solemn in the prisoner's box.

"I am 57," Stevens told Case.

Q. Where do you live? A. Lavalette. I have been there since 1915.

Q. Did you live the year round in Lavalette? A. No, we had a New York apartment in the winter.

Q. Where was the apartment? A. At 120 East 31st St.

Q. Where is Lavalette? A. Nine miles southwest of Barnegat Bay, on a little stretch of beach between the bay and the Atlantic.

Never Sold Pistols

Q. What has been your business? A. I have been retired since 1920. I had been a salesman for the Remington Arms Company. I taught the art of trapshooting with a shotgun at Young's Pier, in Atlantic City.

Case questioned Stevens closely to bring out the fact he had never sold or demonstrated pistols.

Q. Did the Remington Arms Company make pistols? A. Yes, they made old-fashioned double-action Derringers, about 100 a year, which they sold in the South.

Q. Did you ever have a revolver? A. Yes, in 1924, I bought a .38 automatic gun.

Q. Before that, did you own a pistol? Yes, back in 1890 I gave it away. I have not fired a pistol in twenty-five years.

Case had Stevens describe the routes between Lavalette and New Brunswick.

Q. Did you drive an automobile prior to 1922? A. Only a Ford.

Q. Could you drive a gear-shift car? A. No.

Q. Did you have a car at that

time? A. Yes, a Ford station wagon.

Case had Stevens describe the car, which he said was a natural brown, with brown upholstery and an upright wagon top.

This was to offset the testimony of Mrs. Mary Demarest, who said she had seen Henry driving a dark, closed car in New Brunswick the day after the murder.

Q. What were your relations with your sister? A. Very pleasant.

Q. With Mr. Hall? A. Very pleasant.

Q. Where were you on September 14, 1922? A. In Lavalette.

Q. Describe your movements on that day. A. In the afternoon I drove down to see an old friend of mine at Seaside Park. In the morning I was around town, looking after my boats, about a block from my house.

Wife Anxious

Case had Stevens identify a photograph of his house, with part of the beach in the foreground.

Mrs. Henry Stevens followed every word of her husband's testimony. Her lips moved once or twice, as if she were repeating it after him.

Q. The sands in the foreground are the beach front? A. Yes.

Q. Is there any fishing pier at Lavalette? A. No.

Was there a pier of any kind there in 1922? A. No.

Case's questioning was to discredit the testimony of ex-State Trooper Henry Dickman, who testified earlier in the trial that he questioned Stevens concerning the murders on a pier in Lavalette.

Stevens made an excellent witness. He tells his story in a deliberate, easy way that impresses the jury.

Cook Was in House

Q. Continue to tell us what you were doing on September 14? A. In the afternoon I fished and visited my friend at Seaside Park. Returning, I fished some more. About 6 o'clock I came in for supper.

Q. Was Mrs. Stevens there? A. She was in New York. Mrs. Evanson, our cook, was there.

Q. Explain Mrs. Evanson's duties



Jane Gibson

Willie Stevens

in the house. A. She came to our house at 9 o'clock each morning, often preparing our breakfast.

"She prepared the midday meal, often went home in the afternoon, returning for supper. She slept at her house."

Q. What did you do in the evening? A. I went fishing. Then I went to the house of a neighbor, Mr. Eger, to report the fish were biting. Then I returned to the beach to fish again.

Q. How do men fish at Lavalette? Do they go singly or in a group? A. Usually singly.

Weighed Fish for Neighbor

Q. What else can you tell us? A. I was fishing about dusk when Mr. Arthur Applegate came up to me with a bluefish. I said I would weigh it for him with my pocket scales. I had to light a match to see that the fish weighed six pounds.

There was a note of pride in Stevens' voice over a fellow fisherman's achievement as he told Case that a six-pound bluefish was a "mighty good fish."

"Some time after that I was joined by Mr. Eger. About 9 o'clock I left him to go home and clean three fish.

"Then I went back to the beach, I packed my fishing kit. Eger went back to the house with me—it was about 10 o'clock—and we

got a soft drink out of our ice box. "Soon after Eger went home. Then I sat down and read the evening paper.

Gave Wilsons Bluefish

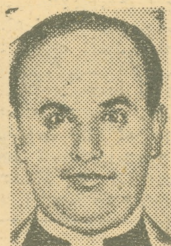
After that I noticed that lights were burning in the home of the Wilsons, next door. I went over to give them a bluefish.

Q. Did you then make any plans for the next day? A. Yes, we had already planned to drive to Point Pleasant.

Q. What were those plans? A. I invited Mrs. Wilson and her two daughters to drive with me to Point Pleasant. They were leaving for the season.

Q. What time did you get up next morning? A. Before day-break. I put on my boots and went out to catch some mullet for bait.

Q. How long were you out there? A. Perhaps a half hour. I got too close to the ocean and a wave hit me. I saw Mr. Mellinger and a friend of his on the beach. I went into the house, changed to dry clothes and went down to the station. I returned with mail and papers and had breakfast, served by Mrs. Evanson. I had an early lunch, then drove the Wilsons and



J. J. Underwood Rev. E. W. Hall

their dog to Point Pleasant to catch a 1.30 train.

Saw Neighbors to Train

I saw them on the train and put their little black spaniel in the baggage car. Then I dropped in a fishing tackle store.

As Stevens continued his testimony, it was apparent he was dissipating, in the minds of some of the jurors at least, the old impression that the Hall-Stevens clan were a haughty, reserved set of aristocrats. The man revealed to the jurors was one of their own kind, with a little more money, of course, and smarter clothes, but one who liked the things they liked and did the things they did, fishing, hunting, visiting and helping his neighbors—a human, kindly man.

"Then I went to Osbornville, about eight miles inland, to our laundry. I went back by way of Mantoloking. That afternoon I fished again. I remember catching a four-pound bluefish. I had supper, prepared by Mrs. Evanson. Then I went to Eger's for a while. I came home and retired about the time of the night before, or earlier.

Went Fishing With Eger

"Saturday I got up about 6.30 or 7 o'clock and prepared my own breakfast. I took a bluefish over to Eger's. I was to dine there. In the morning Mr. Eger and I went fishing again. We returned there for dinner.

"In the afternoon Mr. Eger and I again went fishing. I forgot to say that in the morning I had received a telegram from my wife.

"In the afternoon I got another telegram from Edwin Carpender, my cousin. It said that Mr. Hall had been killed. I ran up to the house, packed a bag and caught a train. I think it was 4.25.

"Before leaving I phoned Edwin Carpender that I was coming. I told Mrs. Evanson I was going away. I called my New York apartment, but Mrs. Stevens was out. I left a message for her with the bell boy.

"I changed cars at Monmouth Junction. There I bought a copy of the New Brunswick Home News and read the story of Mr. Hall's death. That was the first I knew of what had happened—that he had been murdered.

"I reached New Brunswick about 6.30. Edwin Carpender met me. We drove to his house about sup-

per time. I tried to call Mrs. Stevens again, but failed. We had supper, succeeded finally in getting Mrs. Stevens by phone, then we went to Mrs. Hall's.

"We stayed during the evening, then went back to the Carpender home. I went to bed. On Sunday my wife came. We stayed until Sunday night, then returned to our New York apartment. We came out on an early train to New Brunswick Monday morning.

Q. Did you see any scratches on Mrs. Hall's face? A. No, sir.

The state had produced three witnesses—Stillwell, the hears driver; Nagle, the photographer's helper, and Sholz, the camera man—who swore they observed a two-inch scratch on Mrs. Hall's face on the way to the rector's funeral in Brooklyn. Prosecutor Simpson contends she received it in a struggle preceding the murders.

Q. Did you purchase any clothing? A. Yes, I bought a dark suit, to wear at the funeral, from Lyons & Parker, in New Brunswick. It was delivered, I believe to the Carpender home.

Q. Did you attend the funeral? A. Yes, with my wife.

Never Drove Chandler

Q. Did your wife have a car? A. Yes, she had a Chandler.

Q. Did you ever drive it? A. No.

Q. Do you remember a "lucky hook" incident, Mr. Stevens? A. Yes, I gave Mr. Applegate a fish hook and told him it was a "lucky hook."

Q. Did you know Mrs. Eleanor Mills? A. I never met her and never heard of her until this thing happened.

Q. Were you in New Brunswick at any time on Friday? A. No.

Case was preparing to introduce Dr. William H. Anderson, Henry's "double," into the case.

The jury will get a chance to decide if Mrs. Marie Demarest confused him with Stevens. Mrs. Demarest testified that she saw Henry Stevens in New Brunswick the morning after the murders.

Q. Did a man named Dickman come to see you? A. No, never.

Q. Do you keep a diary? A. Yes, I have kept one for the last thirty years.

Q. Do you keep all your move-



Judge Cleary Henry Carpender

ments recorded in that diary? A. No, only certain things.

Q. Were you at or near De Russeys Lane on the Phillips farm on September 14, 1922? A. No.

Q. Were you on September 14 or 15, 1922, at or near New Brunswick? A. No.

Henry answered both questions without hesitancy. Willie fidgeted furiously with his pencil. Mrs. Stevens leaned forward.

Answers Straightforwardly

Case asked Henry if he knew an Oliver C. Grennele. He said he had met him in Miami.

Case introduced a dozen small diaries. His last question was:—"Do you know anything about these murders?"

Stevens denied that he was in De Russeys Lane on the murder night in a straightforward manner, with no particular emphasis. Indeed, by his manner he might have been discussing a fish story.

"Is William Stevens your full brother; have you the same parents?" Simpson snapped into his cross-examination. A. Yes.

Q. Do you know his birth is not recorded in Aiken, S. C.? A. No.

Q. Can you explain the differences in your faces? A. No.

Q. Do you know whether he was born of your mother or of a mulatto? A. No.

Stevens glared for a moment as

Simpson suggested the blood taint, but had himself in hand immediately. His voice was courteous in reply to the prosecutor's rasping questions.

Tries to Break Him Down

Simpson tried to break down Henry's assertion that he knew nothing of pistols.

Q. Didn't you say in a 1922 statement that from your knowledge of automatic pistols a steel jacket bullet would make a larger hole than a lead bullet?

Simpson read a long explanation of pistol fire and effects from the record.

A. I made that statement.

Q. Then you are a baby about



Henry Dickman Ferdinand David

automatic pistols; you don't know anything about them? A. I know something about them, but I have never fired one in my life.

Q. It would take a pretty good man to fire three shots in a woman's head in the dark at six feet, with only her voice to guide him? A. I don't think it would take a marksman to do that.

Q. Is your brother, Willie, a marksman? A. No.

Simpson Snaps at Him

Simpson was snapping at the witness, shaking his finger angrily as he stood not more than two feet away from the witness box.

Q. You put off a scheduled week-end boat trip on Thursday, September 14, saying you had family business, didn't you? Now, did you not so notify a man named Marley, of Philadelphia? A. I don't remember.

Q. Why didn't you tell Capt. Walsh that Eger had been in your house Thursday night? A. Because

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